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October 16, 2019

VIA OVERNIGHT MAIL
& EMAIL

Mr. Jeffrey Zucker
President and CEO
CNN Broadcasting, Inc.
CNN Productions, Inc.
CNN Interactive, Inc.
One CNN Center
Atlanta, GA 30303

Mr. David Vigilante
EVP and General Counsel
CNN Broadcasting, Inc.
CNN Productions, Inc.
CNN Interactive, Inc.
One CNN Center
Atlanta, GA 30303

Re: President Donald J. Trump and Donald J. Trump for President, Inc.
— CNN

Dear Mr. Zucker and Mr. Vigilante:

This firm is litigation counsel for President Donald J. Trump and Donald J. Trump for President, Inc. We write concerning your biased reporting practices relating to our clients. The terms “you” and “your” in this letter shall collectively refer to CNN Broadcasting, Inc., CNN Productions, Inc., CNN Interactive Group, Inc., the website located at CNN.com, and all broadcast television stations owned, operated or affiliated with the foregoing.

Your website expressly represents to the public, in writing, that you are “journalists,” “**truth seekers**,” “united by a mission to inform, engage and empower the world,” and you “stand for **excellence in journalism** and [your] products.” See <https://www.CNN.com/About> (emphasis added). Your slogan is “The Most Trusted Name in News”. Your Facebook account claims you are “widely known to be – the most trusted source for news and information.” Your anchor, Don Lemon, stated on June 6, 2019, as a keynote speaker at Financial Times Live Future of News: “We don’t profess to be a liberal network, we’re a news network ... we have a commitment to the truth and to facts, which has really been paramount, especially always at CNN.” Mr. Zucker said in an interview with *Variety*, published on August 2, 2016: “[O]ur air, as opposed to others’, is **truly fair and balanced**.” (Emphasis added.)

Statements like “excellence in journalism,” “most trusted source for news and information,” “commitment to the truth and to facts” and “truly fair and balanced” are statements that would be widely considered throughout the journalism community and news industry as journalism that complies with industry-accepted codes of ethics, including the Society for Professional Journalists’ Code of Ethics. That code—written by journalism experts for

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practicing journalists (available at <https://www.SPJ.org/pdf/spj-code-of-ethics.pdf>) (the “Code”) —provides in pertinent part:

“Ethical journalism should be **accurate and fair**. Journalists should be **honest ... in gathering, reporting and interpreting information**.” (Emphasis added.)

“Journalists should:

- “Verify information before releasing it.”
- “Provide context. Take special care **not to misrepresent or oversimplify in promoting, previewing or summarizing a story**.”
- “**Label advocacy and commentary**.”
- “**Never deliberately distort facts or context**, including visual information.”
- “**Avoid conflicts of interest**, real or perceived. **Disclose unavoidable conflicts**.”
- “[A]void political and other outside activities that may compromise integrity or impartiality, or may damage credibility.”
- “**Deny favored treatment** to advertisers, donors or any other special interests, and **resist internal and external pressure to influence coverage**.”
- “Abide by the same high standards they expect of others.”

(Emphasis added.)

Recently released video footage of individuals alleged to be your employees (*see* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m7XZmugtLv4>) (the “Footage”) indicates that your reporting relating to President Trump is contrary to your own mission and the aforementioned Code of Ethics. Your own employees appear to state that CNN is focused on trying to “take down President Trump,” driven by a “personal vendetta” that Mr. Zucker purportedly has against him, rather than reporting the news in an objective manner. In the Footage, your employees appear to state that CNN attempts to make its reporting appear neutral and unbiased, when in fact its reporting is far from neutral and highly biased against the President. Among other statements, your employees appear to state the following:

Nick Neville, Media Coordinator at CNN, states:

“Jeff Zucker, basically the president of CNN has a personal vendetta against Trump”

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“[Jeff Zucker has] had an ongoing feud with Trump since *The Apprentice*” (where Zucker was a producer)

“I totally want to do just like the truth, the dogged reporting. But then you have higher up executives like Zucker and other people, who are saying we gotta make profits...so it turns into like certain things that you do are trying just to attract viewers, then it becomes kind of a comedy show”

“Don Lemon comes on, he makes you think he’s objective news, but he’s blatantly opinionated. So either disclose where you’re coming from or get someone whose a little bit more objective. Don Lemon...love him or hate him he’s blatantly anti-Trump, he’s blatantly left. So maybe Don Lemon could disclose that, but CNN makes it appear as though we have 24 hours of unbiased news, that’s not true.”

Cary Poarch, a CNN employee in the Washington, D.C. bureau, states:

“CNN purports to be facts first, and that’s just not the case”

Christian Sierra, a Media Coordinator at CNN, states:

“There’s just nothing we can do if Zucker wants impeachment every single day to be the top story ... He wants impeachment above all else”

“I hate how everything is all Trump all the time now, everyone at the network complains about it, they hate covering Trump every day”

“Our Democratic interviews are like softballs, compared to the Republicans”

The aforementioned examples are merely the tip of the iceberg of the evidence my clients have accumulated over recent years. We also expect substantial additional information about CNN’s wrongful practices to become known in the coming days and weeks.

Never in the history of this country has a President been the subject of such a sustained barrage of unfair, unfounded, unethical and unlawful attacks by so-called “mainstream” news, as the current situation.

Your actions are in violation of the Lanham Act (15 U.S.C. § 1051 *et seq.*), among other applicable laws, by constituting misrepresentations to the public, to your advertisers, and others. Accordingly, my clients intend to file legal action against you, to seek compensatory damages, treble damages, punitive damages, injunctive relief, reimbursement of legal costs, and all other available legal and equitable remedies, to the maximum extent permitted by law.

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Please contact the undersigned to discuss an appropriate resolution of this matter, which would include a substantial payment of damages, as well as all other appropriate measures that are necessary to fully address the magnitude of the situation.

This letter is not intended as a full or complete statement of all relevant facts, applicable law, causes of actions or legal remedies, and nothing herein is intended as, nor should it be deemed to constitute, a waiver or relinquishment of any of my clients' rights, remedies, claims or causes of action, all of which are hereby expressly reserved.

Very truly yours,



CHARLES J. HARDER Of
HARDER LLP

cc: Clients
Ryan Stonerock, Esq.
Mr. Randall L. Stephenson, CEO, AT&T Inc.